

News Release

Release No. CESWF-PA-04-026 Contact: Judy Marsicano

For Release: <u>Immediate 27 May 04</u> Phone: <u>(817) 886-1471</u>

Corps of Engineers urges caution at area lakes for Memorial Day weekend

FORT WORTH, Texas – With the first holiday weekend of the recreation season approaching, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is encouraging everyone to play it safe during the Memorial Day weekend.

"This weekend officially opens the summer recreation season for thousands of waterloving people in Texas," said Lt. Col. Robert Morris, Fort Worth District, Deputy District Engineer. "It's often a family event or the first chance to try out that new boat or jet ski."

The Fort Worth District operates and maintains 25 lakes in Texas, which draw an estimated 25 million visitors every year.

"We want to remind folks to be alert and extremely cautious when in or around water so they can come back again and again during the summer," Morris said.

Common causes of drowning or injuries include lapses in adult supervision of children, swimming beyond marked boundaries and undesignated areas, alcohol and drug abuse, reckless operation of watercraft, diving from banks into unknown depths, skiing in congested areas, overexertion and overcrowding of boats.

Morris encourages everyone enjoying recreational activities on area lakes to wear a lifejacket and always keep others informed of where you will be and when you will return.

Visit the Fort Worth website at www.swf.usace.army.mil.